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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/890,929	08/07/2001	Yasuyuki Nozaki	033808/027 8	1895
38327 7590 02/20/2007 REED SMITH LLP 3110 FAIRVIEW PARK DRIVE, SUITE 1400 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22042			EXAMINER CLOW, LORI A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1631	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		02/20/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/890,929

Applicant(s)

NOZAKI ET AL.

Examiner

Lori A. Clow, Ph.D.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 November 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 August 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Applicants' response, filed 29 November 2006, has been fully considered. Rejections and/or objections not reiterated from previous office actions are hereby withdrawn. The following rejections and/or objections are either reiterated or newly applied. They constitute the complete set presently being applied to the instant application.

Claims 1-15 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-15 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter, for the reasons set forth in the previous Office Action.

Response to Applicant's Arguments

1. Applicant argues that the recitation of "grouping biopolymers in the selected subtree into at least one function group sharing a common one of functional characteristics including enzymatic, metabolic, transporting, and cell cycle functions" and the "displaying the grouping results" are a specific outcome of each independent claim to provide "functional interrelationship as a part of the stored data...and the process". Applicant states that "the claims provide a practical application of the invention in the technological art of gene expression analysis". Applicant further states that the "Examiner agreed with Applicants and withdrew the 101 rejection accordingly in the Office Action dated January 21, 2005.

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This is not persuasive. Firstly, it is noted that the Examiner has re-applied the rejection under 35 USC 101 based upon the New Interim Guidelines established on 22 November 2005, after such time as the initial withdrawal of the 101 rejection. Those New Guidelines can be obtained at MPEP section 2106 (IV).

With regard to the claims providing a “practical application in the technological arts”, it is noted that the “technological arts” test is no longer a means for evaluating subject matter eligibility. Rather, a practical application is claimed if the claimed invention physically transforms an article or physical object to a different state or thing, or if the claimed invention otherwise produces a concrete, tangible, and useful result. In the instant case, a physical transformation of matter is not provided, therefore, the claims must be evaluated for providing a practical application that produces a concrete, tangible and useful result. The focus is not on the steps taken to achieve a particular result, but rather the final result achieved by the claimed invention. For the claim to be “useful” it must satisfy the utility requirement of section 101 in that it must provide a specific, substantial, and credible utility. In the instant case, “a module for displaying a function group of biopolymers” does not provide a specific utility such that one of skill in the art is apprised of a real-world application of a group of biopolymers.

2. Applicant argues that the “module/means of “displaying said function group of biopolymers in a separate display window allows a user to see in a separate window more details and facilitates grouping and functional interrelationships”.

This is not persuasive, as the claims, as a whole must be considered to “constitute a practical application of an abstract idea.” State Street, 149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1600. Thus, the question of whether a claim encompasses statutory subject matter should not focus on

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which category of subject matter a claim is directed to (e.g. process or machine), but “rather on the essential characteristics of the subject matter, in particular its practical utility.” State Street, 149 F.3d at 1375, 47 USPQ2d at 1602; see also AT&T, 172 F.3d at 1360, 50 USPQ2d at 1453.

In the instant claims the modules for performing methods of clustering, selecting etc... that are on a “program embedded in a computer readable medium” (claims 1, 3, 5, 6) or a “computer-implemented system” (claims 8 and 10), constitute nonfunctional descriptive material, as no requisite functionality is present to satisfy the practical application requirement. Merely claiming nonfunctional descriptive material, i.e. abstract ideas, stored in a computer-readable medium, in a computer, does not make the claims statutory. Further, data structures, as in a “program” are descriptive material, *per se* and are not statutory because they are not capable of causing a functional change in the computer. See, e.g., Warmerdam, 33 F.3d at 1361, 31 USPQ2d at 1760 (claim to a data structure *per se* held nonstatutory). Computer programs are viewed as computer listings, *per se*, i.e., the description or expression of the programs, are not physical things. They are neither computer components nor statutory processes, as they are not “acts” being performed. Such claimed computer programs do not define any structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and the other claimed elements of a computer that permit that computer program’s functionality to be realized.

Therefore, the claims remain rejected for being directed to non-statutory subject matter, as stated in the previous Office Action.

Conclusion

No claims are allowed.

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THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Inquiries

Papers related to this application may be submitted to Technical Center 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Technical Center 1600 via the PTO Fax Center. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notices published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1988), 1156 OG 61 (November 16, 1993), and 1157 OG 94 (December 28, 1993) (See 37 CFR § 1.6(d)). The Central Fax Center Number is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lori A. Clow, Ph.D., whose telephone number is (571) 272-0715. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 10 am to 6:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Irem Yucel can be reached on (571) 272-0781.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the

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problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

February 15, 2007

Lori A. Clow, Ph.D.

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Lori A. Clow
Patent Examiner